

Dissertation

GSEM Dissertation (-)

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Areas of Specialization

When students apply to the PhD program in religion, they select one of the six areas of study listed below.

Adventist Studies

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Church History

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Items to Submit. In addition to submitting the items required of all graduate students (see pp. –), applicants to the PhD-ThD programs must also submit

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perspective, the relationship of their religious concerns and ethical values to their responsibilities as a teacher-scholar and leader in the church; an indication of what they hope to accomplish professionally in the future, and a topic for the dissertation if one has already been selected.

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written during MA or MDiv studies. This paper should show the applicant's ability to carry out research and to present the results and conclusions of such work with correct English and acceptable style. The topic of this paper should coincide with the area of concentration.

Language Requirements. Applicants must demonstrate proficiency in specified foreign languages either by passing language proficiency examinations or by taking specified

advanced standing. The director of the PhD and ThD Programs determines the appropriateness, relevance, and currency of the work considered for advanced standing and authorizes such standing. In no case is the minimum residence requirement reduced.

Time Limits. The student is required to finish all regular course work and take the comprehensive examinations within five years of his/her initial registration in the program, and to complete all degree requirements within ten years of initial registration.

Comprehensive Examinations and Doctoral Dissertation Student Advisory Committees

1. The student selects a tentative dissertation topic in consultation with the chair of the department offering the student's area of emphasis. Then the program director, in consultation with the student and the chair of the department, appoints as the chair of the student's doctoral committee, a faculty member in agreement with the tentative topic.

2. The chair collaborate in the selection of two other members to complete the student's doctoral committee. The appointment of the doctoral committee is subject to approval by the PhD/ThD Committee as are any changes to the committee.

3. The program director, in consultation with the dean of the Seminary, appoints two additional members to the doctoral committee. One of these persons, the "external examiner," is normally a scholar from another graduate institution.

Comprehensive Examinations

4. Within a four-week period designated by the PhD-ThD Committee. Four of these examinations are set in the principal area of study and one in the cognate area.

5. Five comprehensive examinations must be completed before the student can sit for comprehensive examinations.

6. The student demonstrates proficiency in the major area of emphasis and in the cognate area of study, familiarity with pertinent literature, and skills in criticism and analysis.

7. The student demonstrates a major area of emphasis than in their cognate area.

8. Upon passing all comprehensive examinations, they are thereby also applying for advancement to candidacy, which is granted subject to passing all comprehensive examinations and approval of the dissertation proposal by the PhD-ThD Committee.

Dissertation Proposal

After taking 3 credits, students register for GSEM (3 credits) for fall semester only, and continue attending scheduled sessions through spring semester. In this course the dissertation topic is reviewed with the PhD program director. Under the guidance of the instructor and the chair of their doctoral committee, students write a tentative proposal. During the following semesters, but normally not later than the last semester of course work, students must submit a final proposal that is approved by their doctoral committee and prepared for submission to the proposal review committee and the PhD-ThD Committee.

The proposal must contain a basic survey of pertinent literature, a clear statement of the problem, a succinct purpose statement, a description of the methodology to be employed, a list of tentative chapter and subsection titles, and a preliminary bibliography.

After the dissertation proposal is approved and the student has passed the comprehensive examinations, he/she registers in GSEM for – dissertation credits for up to six semesters. If the dissertation is not completed after all dissertation credits have been taken, the candidate must register for GSEM every semester, and pay a continuation fee until the dissertation is completed and the defense held, or until the time limit has expired.

Dissertation Preparation

The dissertation prepared by the PhD candidate must

- Make an original contribution to scholarship.
- Demonstrate the candidate's competence to do independent research.
- Reveal the candidate's familiarity with and proficiency in handling the pertinent literature.
- Present a logically organized, methodologically sound, and readable account of the investigation, findings, conclusions, and implications of the study.
- Not exceed 100,000 words in content and footnotes, excluding bibliography.

Oral Defense of Dissertation

Candidates' oral defense of their dissertations normally cannot be made earlier than 12 months after passing the comprehensive examinations. The date is set and advertised by the director of the PhD-ThD programs.

The oral defense is conducted by the dissertation defense committee and is held no later than four weeks before the degree is conferred.

To pass the oral defense, candidates must receive a vote of approval from at least four of the five examiners. The committee votes in one of the following ways:

- Acceptance of the dissertation as presented
- Acceptance of the dissertation subject to minor revisions
- Acceptance of the dissertation subject to major revisions
- Rejection of the dissertation.

Normally, rejection of a dissertation terminates the student's doctoral candidacy, but the PhD-ThD Committee may consider whether to allow him/her to prepare and submit another dissertation and what specific requirements would apply (including possible further course work and additional comprehensive examinations).

After the defense. After the defense

7. The student registers for GSEM for 3 credits.

8. The student registers for GSEM for 3 credits.

Dissertation Secretary with the signed approval page is no later than Wednesday, 30 days before graduation.

Strict adherence to this deadline is essential or graduation is postponed.

For more detailed guidelines and scheduling see the PhD in Religion Handbook. A copy may be accessed online at: www.andrews.edu/sem/programs-degrees/phd/phd-handbook.pdf.